

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 1-11 and 25-33 without prejudice, and add new Claims 35-54 as follows:

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1-11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously presented) A method of developing the specific protocol useful for delivery of content from a first node of a network to a second node thereof, the method comprising:

10 developing a first component adapted to communicate between said first and second nodes;

developing a second component adapted to process the content delivered to said second node; and

15 developing a third component adapted to cooperate with at least one of said first and second components to control functions specific to said protocol.

13. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 12, wherein said cooperation with at least one of said first and second components comprises accessing said first component to cause at least one message to be sent between said second node and said first node, said at least one message causing at least one corresponding function to be executed.

20 14. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 12, wherein said act of developing said first component comprises developing a Java DataSource.

15. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 14, wherein said act of developing said second component comprises developing a Java MediaHandler.

25 16. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 15, wherein said act of developing said third component comprises developing a controller adapted to access said first component to cause at least one message to be sent between said second node and said first node, said at least one message causing at least one corresponding function to be executed.

30 17. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 14, wherein said act of developing a first component comprises developing a DataSource component further adapted to setup a session and handshake or negotiate conditional access parameters.

18. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 14, wherein said act of developing a first component comprises developing a DataSource component further adapted to specify the channel on which said content will be delivered.

19. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 12, wherein said act of developing a first component comprises adapting said first component to provide messaging in support of a plurality of functional modes in cooperation with said third component, said third component being adapted to provide said plurality of functional modes.

20. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 12, wherein said act of developing a second component further comprises developing a player component adapted for implementing said second component.

21. (Previously presented) CPE adapted for operation within a content-based network, said CPE comprising at least one software application adapted for providing on-demand services to at least one user using at least one network-specific protocol, said at least one application comprising:

a first software component adapted to communicate between said CPE and another entity of said network;

a second software component adapted to process the content delivered to said CPE; and

a third software component adapted to cooperate with at least one of said first and second components to control functions specific to said protocol.

22. (Previously presented) The CPE of Claim 21, wherein said CPE comprises a DSTB with Java-based middleware, and at least one of said first, second and third components of said at least one software application comprises at least one class and at least one interface disposed within the application directory hierarchy.

23. (Previously presented) The CPE of Claim 22, wherein said CPE is adapted to:

receive said at least one application over said network; and

subsequent to said receipt, launch said at least one application to configure at least one path to said at least one component.

24. (Previously presented) The CPE of Claim 23, wherein said CPE further comprises a plurality of applications, said plurality of other applications being enabled to access said at least one component via at least one of said at least one configured paths.

25. - 33. (Cancelled)

34. (Previously presented) A head-end apparatus adapted for providing a network-specific on-demand application to CPE of said network, the apparatus comprising:

at least one computer; and

5 at least one computer program adapted to develop a specific protocol useful in implementing said on-demand application according to the method comprising:

developing a first component adapted to communicate between said head-end and said CPE;

10 developing a second component adapted to process the content delivered to said CPE; and

developing a third component adapted to cooperate with at least one of said first and second components to control functions specific to said on-demand application.

35. (New) The CPE of Claim 21, wherein said CPE is further adapted to:

receive said at least one application;

15 store said at least one application within a storage device of said CPE; and

run said application to configure said CPE according to a network-specific protocol implemented by said at least one application.

36. (New) The CPE of Claim 21, wherein said at least one application comprises an application configured with a network-specific protocol extension and wherein said CPE is  
20 further adapted to selectively allow a plurality of applications resident on said CPE to access said extension.

37. (New) A storage apparatus comprising a computer readable medium, said medium comprising at least one computer program having a plurality of instructions which, when executed by a computer, implement a network-specific protocol, the at least one computer  
25 program comprising:

a first module for communication between a first and second node of said network;

a second module for processing content delivered to said second node of said network;

and

30 a third module for controlling at least one of said act of communicating and said act of processing according to said network-specific protocol.

38. (New) The apparatus of Claim 37, wherein said controlling comprises causing at least one message to be sent between said second node and said first node, said at least one message causing at least one corresponding function to be executed.

39. (New) The apparatus of Claim 37, wherein said communication between said first and second node of said network comprises utilizing a Java DataSource.

40. (New) The apparatus of Claim 39, wherein said processing content delivered to said second node comprises utilizing a Java MediaHandler.

41. (New) The apparatus of Claim 40, wherein said controlling comprises utilizing a controller adapted to cause at least one message to be sent between said second node and said first node, said at least one message causing at least one corresponding function to be executed.

42. (New) The apparatus of Claim 39, wherein said communication between said first and second node of said network comprises utilizing a DataSource component further adapted to setup a session and handshake or negotiate conditional access parameters.

43. (New) The apparatus of Claim 39, wherein said communication between said first and second node of said network comprises utilizing a DataSource component further adapted to specify the channel on which said content will be delivered.

44. (New) The apparatus of Claim 37, wherein said communication between said first and second node of said network comprises providing messaging in support of a plurality of functional modes; and wherein said controlling comprises providing said plurality of functional modes.

45. (New) The apparatus of Claim 37, wherein said processing content delivered to said second node of said network further comprises utilizing a player component adapted to perform said processing.

46. (New) CPE adapted for operation within a content based network offering on-demand services according to at least one network-specific protocol, said CPE comprising:  
a storage device; and

a digital processor operatively coupled to said storage device, said digital processor adapted to run at least one software application stored on said storage device, said software application comprising a plurality of components adapted to, when executed on said processor:

communicate between said CPE and another entity of said network;

process the content delivered to said CPE; and  
control at least one of said communicating and said processing according to said  
network-specific protocol.

47. (New) The CPE of Claim 46, wherein said CPE comprises a digital settop box  
(DSTB) with Java-based middleware, and said at least one software application comprises at  
least one class and at least one interface disposed within the application directory hierarchy.

48. (New) The CPE of Claim 47, wherein said CPE is adapted to:  
receive said at least one application over said network; and  
subsequent to said receipt, launch said at least one application to configure at least one  
path to said at least one component.

49. (New) The CPE of Claim 48, wherein said CPE further comprises a plurality of  
applications, said plurality of other applications being enabled to access said at least one  
component via at least one of said at least one configured paths.

50. (New) A method of developing the specific protocol useful for delivery of  
content from a first node of a network to a second node thereof, the method comprising:  
developing a plurality of media interface components adapted to implement a network-  
specific protocol;

developing a configured application by disposing said plurality of components within a  
software application; and

developing at least one path to said media interface components;  
wherein said at least one path and said media interface components cooperating to  
provide network specific on-demand services.

51. (New) The method of Claim 50, wherein said configured application is run on a  
CPE.

52. (New) The method of Claim 51, wherein said act of developing a plurality of  
media interface components comprises developing a plurality of Java Media Framework  
components.

53. (New) The method of Claim 52, wherein said act of disposing said plurality of  
media interface components comprises disposing a plurality of classes and interfaces within the  
directory hierarchy structure of said application.

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54. (New) The method of Claim 51, wherein said act of disposing said plurality of media interface components comprises:

providing said components to said CPE;

providing said software application to said CPE; and

5 assembling said configured application at said CPE using at least said components and said software application.